

760 The sin of gluttony can be overcome by the virtue of tempera in food and drink, which we achieve through fasting. Saint Chrysostom teaches:

We have, you see, a gentle and loving Lord who demands nothing of us beyond our capabilities. In other words, it is not arbitrarily that he looks for fasting and abstinence from food to be performed by us, nor simply for the sake of our remaining without food, but rather that we may be detached from things of this life and devote all our spare time to spiritual matters.<sup>475</sup>

***b. Lust and Its Opposite Virtue—Wholeness of Being***

761 The sexual impulse is natural for a human being. The essence of passion of lust lies in the unrestrained and disordered quest for body graduation, when a person is driven by self-love and a desire to please oneself, often at the expense of one's own dignity and the dignity another person. Lust leads to a variety of sins: pre-marital sexual relations (fornication) and extramarital sexual relations (adultery), sexual slavery, and the commodification of the person. This passion is dangerous not only for the body but also for the soul, because it enslaves a person and destroys the ability to love. The spiritual Fathers consequently stress the necessity of constantly struggling against this passion.

762 Saint Cyril of Jerusalem affirms that the decisive rejection of lust is essential element of the Christian belief in the resurrection of the body "He who believes that his body shall remain to rise again, is careful of his robe, and defiles it not with fornication; but he who disbelieves resurrection, gives himself to fornication, and misuses his own body, as though it were not his own."<sup>476</sup>

763 A human being achieves chastity in the sexual life through the virtue of wholeness of being. This virtue orders the sexual impulse through love of neighbour and self. Chastity allows a person to control one's sexual impulse and restores the harmony of body, soul, and spirit.

***c. Avarice (Love of Money) and Its Opposite Virtue—Generosity***

764 Avarice is a passion for money and material goods. The Holy Father taught that love of wealth is not part of man's innate nature but appears as a distortion of man's desire for eternal life.<sup>477</sup> The passion

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<sup>475</sup> JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *Homilies on Genesis*, 10, 1: PG 53: 82.

<sup>476</sup> CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, *The Catechetical Lectures*, 18, 1: PG 33, 1018.

<sup>477</sup> See JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *Homilies on the Statues*, 2, 5: PG 49, 39-41.

for acquiring wealth, which takes possession of a person, makes one a slave to money. The acquisition of wealth becomes an end in itself and leads to various sins. Such a passion gives rise to the illusion of one's self-sufficiency as we come to rely solely on material goods. Saint John Chrysostom teaches:

Wealth is not a bad thing, but avarice and love of money are. A covetous person is one thing, and a rich person is another thing. The covetous person is not rich; he is in want of many things, and while he needs many things, he can never be rich. The covetous man is a keeper, not a master, of wealth; a slave, not a lord.<sup>478</sup>

Saint John Climacus regards avarice and greed as idolatry, since in such blindness a person places all his hopes in earthly goods.<sup>479</sup>

765 the virtue of generosity and its concrete expression, almsgiving, make a person capable of properly managing material goods and growing rich in God. Saint John Chrysostom exhorts:

And let there be no gold lying by in your houses, but that which is more precious than millions of money, that is, alms and love to man, for your treasure. For this gives us boldness toward God, but the other... causes the devil to bear hard upon us... Arm your right hand against him... stow away all your fortune in your mind, and instead of a chest and a house, let heaven keep your gold... Why then do we, to the neglect of our own selves, waste all our attention upon those things, which when we are gone we can no longer reach, and often even while we stay here we cannot keep hold of, when we might have such riches as to be found not in this life only, but also in that, in the easiest circumstances?<sup>480</sup>

#### ***d. Melancholy (Sadness) and Its Opposite Virtue Joy in the Holy Spirit***

766 The Holy Fathers, in accordance with the teaching of the apostle Paul, distinguished between salvific sorrow for one's sins and melancholy as a passion: "For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death" (2 Cor 7:10). Sinful melancholy as a passion reveals itself in one of two ways. Most often it is roused by some other passion, when we desire something but cannot satisfy this yearning. This gives rise to depression, which can lead to despair and even suicide. Melancholy can also arise from

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<sup>478</sup> JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *Homilies on the Statues*, 2, 5: PG 49, 50.

<sup>479</sup> See JOHN CLIMACUS, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, Step 16: PG 88, 924.

<sup>480</sup> JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *Homilies on Romans*, 14: PG 60, 538.